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# Massachusetts State 911 Department Newsletter

## ON PSAP PATROL

### Wachusett Regional Emergency Communications Center



Pictured above from left to right: Chief David Armstrong and Dispatcher Amy Savasta

This month I had the pleasure of visiting the Wachusett Regional Emergency Communications Center (WRECC). I met with Holden Police Chief, David Armstrong, a 31 year veteran of the Holden Police Department, and Amy Savasta, a 21 year veteran telecommunicator. The WRECC, located at the Holden Police Department, was built from the ground up in 2010, is equipped with four positions and dispatches 9-1-1 calls for Police, Fire, and EMS. In 2014, the Holden Police PSAP regionalized with the Town of Princeton, and there are plans to include West Boylston in the WRECC sometime in 2017. The WRECC employs seven full time civilian dispatchers and plans to increase staff by adding six part time dispatchers in the near future.

I asked Chief Armstrong what was the most difficult part of regionalizing. He stated it was the constant budget modifications that were due to the amount of construction that had to be completed in order to bring this project to fruition. In contrast, he stated that the easiest part was the transition and the

first day. He advised that everything went smoothly and without a hitch largely due to the efforts of the State 911 Department's Regional PSAP Coordinator, Christine Wingfield, of whom Chief Armstrong said, "She is a worker. Thank God for her".

One of the unique things about the WRECC is the Criminal Justice program that Chief Armstrong began 18 years ago with the local Holden High School. The program is offered to juniors and seniors in which they learn about criminal justice, law enforcement, and 9-1-1 communications. Best of all is once the student successfully completes the program, the State 911 Department approves the student as a certified 9-1-1 telecommunicator. Imagine that! Right out of high school and already certified to be a 9-1-1 telecommunicator! Here is the exciting part, every year Chief Armstrong hosts a career night at which representatives from the State 911 Department, Fire, Police, FBI, ATF, DEA and other agencies attend and talk to the students about their many different career opportunities. Chief Armstrong

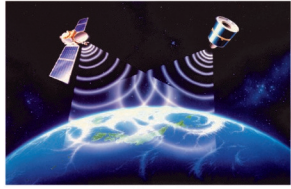
explains that it comes down to the law of averages. Out of thirty students, only one may become a Trooper, two may become local police officers, and three will be employed as full time dispatchers. But by introducing them to the different careers- four more may become Firefighters, one an FBI Agent, five EMT's and so on. This obviously is indicative of how much he truly cares about the future of "his kids" as he calls them. The program has done so well that when it started, there were only six students, and now there are sixty with a running waiting list!

I was struck by how well the employees are treated and recognized for their efforts- constantly! This was echoed by Dispatcher Savasta when she said, "I have worked in many departments and this is the best. Morale is high, it is a great place to work and everyone knows it".

~Ronnie Z.







### **Next Generation 9-1-1 News Flashes**

The site surveys for the Next Generation 9-1-1 system are continuing with almost 200 PSAPs completed. If you haven't seen General Dynamics Information Technology, Inc. (GDIT) at your PSAP yet, you can expect to see them before June.

All of the equipment for the data centers, the State 911 Department's training centers and the pilot PSAPs is up and running in GDIT's lab. The component testing, system testing and failover testing continues. The make ready work for the project has started with circuits being installed at the training centers, and cabling work is also being scheduled. After the make ready work is completed at the training centers, GDIT will be scheduling the circuit installations and cabling work at the pilot sites.

We are working on the project schedule and expect to have a communication out with more details on the equipment and the project schedule in the next few weeks. If you have any questions on the project or the schedule, please feel free to contact Tricia Pries at (508)-821-7206 or via email at [tricia.pries@state.ma.us](mailto:tricia.pries@state.ma.us)

## **Updates from our Systems Division**



### **Check your Air Conditioning**

Although it may not seem like it with all the snow on the ground and cold temperatures, spring is here with summer around the corner. Now is the time to start checking your air conditioning systems to ensure they are running properly before the summertime heat hits. The 9-1-1 equipment room, with all the equipment that generates heat, needs to be within a particular temperature range to ensure the equipment works as expected since excessive heat can lead to failures.

### **DLR Upgrades Completed for Next Generation 9-1-1**

The DLR upgrades to enable Next Generation 9-1-1 or "i3" media delivery have been completed. This upgrade was needed for the DLRs to interoperate with the Next Generation 9-1-1 system. We would like to thank all PSAPs for their help and cooperation in completing this work.

## Updates from our Fiscal Division



As we head into the final quarter of Fiscal Year 2015, it is recommended that PSAPs review all grant awards. Any and all **budget modifications** shall be filed by **April 30, 2015**. In addition, it is recommended that PSAPs check in with vendors, where applicable, to ensure delivery and installation on or before **June 30, 2015** of all commodities and services awarded under the Fiscal Year 2015 grant programs.



Regional Development Grant awardees should review project timelines. In compliance with grant guidelines, extension requests shall be submitted ninety (90) days in advance of contract expiration (June 30, 2015).



As a point of clarification, once a PSAP receives payment on a reimbursement request submitted, the PSAP will be required to submit a new reimbursement request for any reduction(s) that resulted from missing documentation. Submission of missing documentation only cannot be accepted. A new submission is required.



When requesting reimbursement for salaries, PSAPs should be sure to complete the reimbursement form showing each pay period. PSAPs should not lump multiple pay periods on one line. Each period should be recorded on the reimbursement form as a separate entry. This will assist to avoid reductions when processing the reimbursement.

## Updates from our Training Division

The Massachusetts Communications Supervisors Association (MCSA) hosted a reunion event at the International in Bolton on March 24, 2015 to honor graduates of the Communications Center Manager Course (CCM) conducted annually by Fitch & Associates in Kansas City, MO. The leadership program involves two weeks of intensive classroom and on line training. The CCM course is funded through a grant program made available by the State 911 Department.

### 2012 Recipients

Don Hancock	Billerica Police Department
Erin Hastings	New Braintree State Police
Kim Parker	Boston Police Department
Christopher Ryan	Andover Police Department
Darrell True	Wrentham Public Safety

### 2013 Recipients

Skip Botelho	Cambridge Emergency Communications
David Mazza	Townsend Public Safety
Lauren Mielke	Southampton Public Safety
Robert Rowe	Wellesley Police Department
Amy West	Newburyport Police Department

### 2014 Recipients

Barbara Boiteau	Sturbridge Police Department
Lee Ann Delp	Essex County Regional RECC
Stacy Poutas	Newton Police Department
Penny Ryan	Charlton Police Department
Anthony Newell	Nashoba Valley Regional RECC



**Pictured above from left to right**  
*Leslie Carroll, MCSA Scholarship Coordinator*  
*Jay Fitch, President and Founder of Fitch & Associates*  
*Lee Ann Delp, MCSA President*

# Massachusetts

# 9-1-1

Help is  
at your  
fingertips.



[www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911)



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